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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

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RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

UNCLAS ATHENS 002245

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SUBJECT: GREECE/MACEDONIA: PRIME MINISTER TELLS PARLIAMENT
NAME SOLUTION REQUIRED FOR NATO INVITATION

REF: ATHENS 2199 AND PREVIOUS

Summary

¶1. On November 16, PM Karamanlis told the Greek Parliament that Macedonia's "access to Euro-Atlantic organizations" depends upon a "definitive and mutually acceptable solution" on the name issue. Meanwhile, FM Bakoyannis publicly repeated the point that "good neighborly relations" requires a "mutually satisfactory solution for the name dispute."

PM Karamanlis to Parliament

¶2. During the November 16 "Prime Minister's Hour" at the Greek Parliament, PM Karamanlis was asked by far-right Popular Orthodox Rally (LAOS) Party leader George Karatzaferis whether Greece had changed its "expressed direction" on the Macedonia name issue. Karamanlis responded that Greece has had no "change in direction," and continues to proceed with "frankness, determination, and a constructive spirit." He then added, "Only a definitive and mutually acceptable solution, only active respect of the Agreements and the principles of good neighborliness can "unlock" and ensure objective prospects for alliance relations, partnership relations, relations of solidarity with that neighboring country. There is no other road that leads to its accession to Euro-Atlantic organizations." He added, that if Macedonia wants to "enter NATO and the EU, it needs to prove in practice that it wishes to be an ally and partner, to demonstrate practical respect for the principles of international law, to prove that it fulfills all prerequisites without any lessening of these obligations, to cover the distance that it needs to, so that we can meet at a common, mutually acceptable solution."

¶3. In response to rumors that the GOG might call for a popular referendum on any compromise reached with Skopje, Karamanlis said that in the event of an agreement with Skopje, the Government of Greece would not/not call for a popular referendum, but that it would put the agreement to the Greek Parliament for approval/ratification.

FM Bakoyiannis' Interview on "Good Neighborly Relations

¶4. Meanwhile, in an interview published by Greek Daily "Ta Nea" 11/19, FM Bakoyiannis termed U/S Burns' statement to the HIRC 11/15 on Macedonia "not new" and "no surprise for Greece" (Comment: Greek papers have widely reported U/S Burn's statement to the HIRC that Macedonia should not be denied an invitation to NATO for any reason other than

failure to meet the substantive qualifications for entry as a "blow" to Greece. End Comment). Bakoyannis emphasized that Greece also wants to see Macedonia in NATO, but "as their neighbor, we wish our alliance relationship . . . to become buttressed on the firm foundations of mutual confidence and good neighborly relations. The practical proof of the existence of these self-evident conditions, necessary conditions for any alliance relationship, would be the discovery of a mutually satisfactory solution for the name dispute." Later, she added, ". . . a mutually acceptable solution is the only way for Skopje to reach NATO and the EU, we mean it."

COUNTRYMAN